



The Legion-Air

Wayne Sorrentino
Commander

Tim Van Patten
Adjutant

Jim Bojanowski
Editor



thelegionair@gmail.com

August 2015

Commander's Message: Greetings

Legionnaires & friends. Thank you to Lamm Post's Legionnaires and Auxiliary for the fine job on the food, the sheet cake with "Congratulations Wayne" and their hospitality in the Lamm Post Grove for our July County meeting. Nicely done and many kudos for your hard work.

Concentrating on membership will be the key to success this year. We each need to do everything possible to stop the membership losses, and to begin increasing our membership in Erie County: **Every member needs to recruit a new member or sign up a lapsed member.**

We can do this; just one new member at a time (there are over 62K veterans in Erie County). Practice and use your elevator speech and ASK THEM TO JOIN The American Legion at your Post or a Post close to their home base. Remember: "JUST ASK" does work.

Wherever I go this year, I know that I am representing the 7,089 Legionnaires of Erie County in our 39 Posts. I am doing all I can to make you all proud of Erie County and our County Leadership Team. One of my Aides has resigned for health reasons, so I'm in the market for two more Aides. Please call or email me if you're interested: (716) 891-5164 or wayne.sorrentino@verizon.net. Thank you in advance for stepping up. My Aides will be personally involved in the membership effort this year, so step up and take the Aide's J-O-B to assist your Legion family!

I met several vets at the Vets Appreciation Day event on Saturday, and surprisingly, none of them are Legionnaires! I explained why each vet should join The American Legion, and gave each my business card. One has emailed his interest to me today, so I'm expecting that he will join when I send him the application. "JUST ASK" does work. If you don't ask a veteran friend/neighbor to join, who will? Let's not wait until next May or June to make the push for membership. Let's do it NOW.

Membership – VC Nelson Oldfield

Well it has been a busy month I attended the Department meeting along with many others from our County. There are some drastic changes coming to membership. I spoke about these last night at the County meeting. For those of you who did not attend the County meeting or Department convention I would like to go over what is going on. There is a proposal by National to increase dues by \$5 and this will be brought up at the National Convention, this proposal may pass or maybe not. At the meeting Department offered to pick up \$2 of the \$5 dues increase if the motion goes through. I think that is a great gesture to help the Posts for this year. If that proposal goes through the increase will be in effect in January and anyone who has not paid by then will be required to pay the higher price.

I have also offered to help any Post that I can with their membership. Department will be taking out some ads to promote the Legion, this is a first, and hopefully generate some leads. I will keep you posted on it. There are also some nice cash incentives planned for the Posts.

There is a membership meeting August 15 at the Turner-Schrader Post #34 1513 Palmyra street, Shortsville New York. Sign in is at 9 AM, free lunch served at 1:00 PM. It would be great if we could get a couple of members from each Post to attend, I need your help on this, The American Legion is the premier Veterans organization and we need to keep it on top.

At the last county meeting I passed out some address changes & prospective leads, I need to make sure you follow up on them.

There is no need to send the County the Pink copy of the Post Dues Transmittal. I will use the Department report to see how well we are doing. I do have some of the Pinks in my possession.

Americanism – VC Suzanne Quirk

As this is the convention season, the bulk of my report will concentrate on extending congratulations to those who received recognition for a job well done at the Post, District and Department Levels.

First, I would like to spotlight two community activities I attended that instilled patriotism and were supported by local Posts. On July 1, I attended a Service to Honor All Veterans in Eden NY. The Newell-Faulkner Post #880 provided the color guard. It was a very reverent ceremony and well attended by the community. On July 22, I enjoyed an evening of patriotic music performed by the Buffalo Niagara Concert Band at Memorial Park, Hamburg, NY. The Hamburg American Legion Post #527 sponsored this performance.

Erie County received and distributed awards at the 8th District Convention. The Michael J. Kogutek Scholarship was awarded to Hannah DeFries. The distinction of 8th District Legionnaire of the Year was awarded to Erie County Legionnaire of the Year, Kathleen Garvey of ERIECO Women's Post #1586.

Erie County distinguished itself by hosting a productive and well run Department Convention. During the 8th District Caucus Erie County presented another Michael J. Kogutek Scholarship to Stephen Craig. Also, Jim Bojanowski was installed at the 8th District Vice Commander. Congratulations go to the Newell-Faulkner Post # 880 for earning 1st Place Children and Youth Award at Department.

A common theme in many reports was the importance of Consolidated Post Reports. They do get used to determine awards and are the basis of the Department Commander's Report to National and the National Commander's Report to Congress. So now is the time for Posts to begin to keep track of hours and funds extended in their service to the community and veterans.

Membership – continued

The Department convention went well I had a great time and learned more about the Legion. Jim Bojanowski did an excellent job planning the convention and see it through.

If you have a question on membership please email me at the following email address nelson126@roadrunner.com and if you have an email address you can share it would be helpful for membership issues. Plus save the cost of Postage. Thanks for your service! Nelson



Special Activities – VC Joe Orzechowski

The date for our annual Erie County Golf Tournament is ominously close at hand. We have received some donations but, at the time I write this, we have **no** golfers signed up to play. And, as you can imagine, it's very difficult to have a golf tournament without golfers. So, please look around and see if there is anyone you know, work with or live next door to that might be interested in playing a round of golf and enjoying a steak dinner with 3 hours of open bar. There will be gifts, prizes and a trophy. If all that's not enough to entice you, let me point out that it's for a good cause. And, in case your handicap is a bit north of 10 strokes and you're a little concerned about the competition, remember that you won't be playing against the likes of Phil Mickelson or Jim Furyk. It's "best ball" format, so all you need is one decent player on your foursome and you'll be able to make a run at the trophy. Better to just forget the score and have some fun.

For those of you who may have missed last month's article, the tournament will take place on Friday August 21st at the Elma Meadows Golf Course with registration at 12:30 pm. Dinner and drinks will be at the Donovan Post #1626 at 3210 Genesee St, Cheektowaga. The cost is \$90 per golfer. For information email me at bjorzechowski@verizon.net or call 839-9109. Please help us to make this a successful event again this year.

Reminder: All Posts need to submit their Post Officer forms to the County Office.

Erie County Office Hours Staffed by Tim Van Patten every Mon., Wed., & Fri. from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, excluding holidays.

Erie County Website – eriecountyal.org.



SUBMISSIONS
For the September
"The Legion-Air"
August 21
thelegionair@gmail.com

Buffalo New York State Convention

We have just completed hosting the 97th Annual Convention of the Department of New York American Legion. Together with the Auxiliary and SAL about 1500 American Legion Family members from across New York State were present. The Hyatt and Adam's Mark Hotels did an excellent job as hosts. The Legion held all of their functions at the Hyatt. I can personally say they treated us very well. We received rave reviews from everyone who attended.

Thanks go out to our local committee who worked very hard to support this event. The Visit Buffalo Niagara Office, also helped support us tremendously, with organization, badge printing, and bus service. For the parade we received the barricades and no parking signs from the City of Buffalo. Erie County Service Officer Fran McLaughlin arranged and funded the reviewing stand and sound system.

To everyone who supported us with purchasing an Ad, Booster, Raffle Ticket, or Bar Pin, I thank you for your support. I brought extra program books and packets to the meeting tonight for anyone who did not receive one. After all of the bills are paid, we hope to add a few dollars to the County coffers and help to keep supporting the programs of the Erie County American Legion. Our new Department Commander is James Yermas from Amsterdam, NY.

Thanks again for all of your support.

Jim Bojanowski
2015 General Chairman

The new Department Auxiliary President is Janet Mahoney and her project for the year is Agent Orange. All funds raised by our state will go to battle the devastating effect this disease has on our Viet Nam Veterans. Diane Gerber, our outgoing Department President's project for this past year was "A Soldiers Wish". Over \$70,000 was raised and Diane got to meet her "Soldier Boy" Mike Sulsona. He is a Viet Nam Veteran who lost both legs in a land mine explosion and spoke of his experiences and told us about his wish of a screened back porch so he could do his writing there. Diane surprised him by granting her first wish to her "Soldier Boy".

That same day we had a visit from Rueben Brown a former Buffalo Bills football player. He spoke about his Children's Foundation in the Buffalo area. Nancy Babis was elected to be our Mighty Eighth District President from Niagara County. Submitted by Kathie Renner



Thursday County Meeting Dates

Executive Dinner Meeting: 6:30 PM

August 20, Hamburg Post # 527 (Casual)

1 Memorial Dr., Hamburg, NY 14075

Menu: Chiavetta Chicken, & Sides

September 24, Concord Post # 431

October 22, Orchard Park Post # 567

Department Membership Workshop Saturday August 15

Turner-Schrader Post # 34

Shortsville, NY 14548

Sign-In 9:00 AM, Starts 9:30 AM

Ends by 1 PM with a free lunch

Erie County Fair Veteran's Day Aug. 16

11:30 AM Veteran's Recognition Ceremony
at Veteran's Park, 1 pm Parade Starts

August 29 – September 3

National Convention Baltimore, MD.

**Department Commander James Yermas
addresses the Executive Committee.**





Sunday August 9

ALL YOU AN EAT Pancake Breakfast at A. J. Jurek Post #1672, 8 am to 12:30 pm. Fresh, hot, buttermilk pancakes, "Egglands Best" eggs, link & patty sausage, juice & coffee or tea. Adults \$7, children under 12 \$3, children under 5 free.

Sunday September 27

ERIECO Women' Post # 1586 is having its Annual Corn Roast from 1 PM to 5 PM at Lamm Post # 622 Grove. Tickets cost \$12 and includes corn (roasted and boiled), hot dogs, salads, deserts, coffee, beer and soft drinks. There are door prizes & raffles.

East Aurora Post # 362

Visit us on our cruise nights held the third Monday of every month, from 5 to 8:00 PM, running through Sept. 21st. If you bring a car to show, you get a ticket for a chance to win one of many door prizes. We also have a DJ playing 60's music, & food.

NY Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul address the Department Convention



THE AMERICAN LEGION
The Erie County Committee
609 City Hall
65 Niagara Square
Buffalo, NY 14202
PHONE: (716) 852-6500
FAX: (716) 852-4664
e-mail: veteran14202@verizon.net



Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by August 21 for the September edition.

PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor